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ABSTRACT

A key issue in educational administration in England at present is the interrelationship between professional responsibility and public acceptability, and between professional responsibility and political control. These papers show how the conference focused on this issue and the question, Should the education service in the future continue as an integral part of local government? Two conference participants responded to each of two papers presented at the conference, "Local Government and the Education Service" and "Institutional Autonomy and Public Accountability." The concluding presentation, "The Specifics of Autonomy and Accountability: A Simulation Exercise," involved participants in solving nine simulated problems. (Author/MLF)

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AUTONOMY AND ACCOUNTABILITY IN EDUCATIONAL ADMINISTRATION

The Proceedings of the fourth annual conference of the British Educational Administration Society, arranged by BEAS (Wales) at University College, Cardiff, Friday 3rd, Saturday 4th October, 1975.

Steering Committee Chairman : Dr. Meredydd Hughes

Steering Committee Secretary : J.N.O. Harries

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
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Edited for the Society by
Meredydd Hughes and John Richards,
University College, Cardiff.
November 1975.

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AUTONOMY AND ACCOUNTABILITY IN EDUCATIONAL ADMINISTRATION

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FOREWORD

The Fourth Annual Conference of the British Educational Administration Society in 1975 took as its theme "Autonomy and Accountability in Educational Administration". A key issue in educational administration in this country at present is the inter-relationship between professional responsibility and public acceptability on the one hand, and on the other between professional responsibility and political control. These Proceedings show how the conference focussed on this issue and how the inevitable question arose: should the education service in future continue as an integral part of local government? For the time being, Conference inclined to the view that the present challenge was with local government to provide a satisfactory framework within which the education service can function effectively and professionals can discharge their responsibilities adequately; but there is no doubt that the Conference will be returning to this issue on future occasions.

The 1975 Conference was memorable for several reasons. The following pages show the high quality of the papers given and the discussions which followed. Members of the Taylor Committee of Enquiry into the Management and Government of Schools were present for the whole Conference and participated fully in the discussions. In addition, the Conference was residential for the first time and the Society was also paying its first visit to Wales. In honour of this occasion, the Conference was entertained to dinner by University College, Cardiff, and the Vice-Chancellor of the University of Wales presided. To BEAS (Wales), the Conference Committee, and to Dr. Meredydd Hughes and Mr. John Richards who have edited these Proceedings so promptly for the benefit of the Taylor Committee, we are enormously indebted for a most successful Conference.

County Hall
Bedford
October 1975

D.P.J. Browning

J K Boynton,
Chief Executive of
Cheshire County
Council

LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND THE EDUCATION SERVICE

One of the best known quotations from the (1967) Report of the Committee on the Management of Local Government (headed by Lord Redcliffe-Maud) reads as follows:-

> "There is a long tradition of associating a particular committee with a specific service and this is hardened by the requirement of statutes that for certain services specific committees should be set up. The power which local authorities have (under section 85 of the 1933 Act) to delegate their functions to committees is a convenience for a council and indeed is often regarded as necessary for the transaction of business. But delegation disperses direction and control amongst a number of separate committees. There exists therefore in local authorities in this country an organisation which is based on separate parts in each of which there is gathered the individual service, with its professional departmental hierarchy led by a principal officer and, supervising it, a committee of members. There may be unity in the parts, but there is disunity in the whole." (p.26, para 97).

It would be unfair to single out education departments as a special example of the pattern detected by the Committee. However, it must be conceded that education departments have a reputation for seeking to be independent and for maintaining a distinct identity. This has prompted some observers to say harsh things about the unwillingness of "education" to be involved in a corporate approach to the management of a local authority.

Such an attitude overlooks the fact that other departments have similar traditions of independence, much turning upon the historical development within the authority itself and the strengths of former chairmen and chief officers. Generally speaking, the older the service the greater the likelihood of its maintaining a sturdy independence.

The arrival on the scene of chief executives and corporate management has sometimes strengthened rather than weakened any latent desire for independence. I often feel that those who criticise "education" for separateness, overlook the long battles which were fought in the 19th century to establish the right of all children to a free education. Rereading the achievements of Kay-Shuttleworth

the first Chairman of the Committee of the Privy Council on Education: the disappointments caused by the timidity of the Newcastle Commission Report in 1861: the tyranny of the grants system based on payment by results: the long battle to have a national system which went beyond the services which could be provided by voluntary church effort, I can appreciate that modern attitudes are still much shaped by the historical developments of the past.

I am no expert on the history of education. But I have read enough to see that to talk about education as an outsider without regard to that history, is like trying to understand the Irish question without regard to the past. Fortunately the history of education is not so long, nor its effects so pronounced, as the past history of Ireland. It would be a mistake, nevertheless, not to realise that many modern attitudes are reflections of past battles.

I have said that, in some quarters, education has been criticised for its unwillingness to accept or participate in corporate management, and for expressing scepticism about the application of modern management methods to schools and so forth. The issue was cogently put in an article in the Local Government Chronicle, 'It may be that education should no longer be a local government function, as is advocated by some; or that education has too long been allowed a privileged position within local government, as is felt by others. Certainly the relationship at present seems an unhappy one and is good neither for local government nor for the education service itself.'

It seemed to me that the best way to open up this subject for discussion would be to try and suggest answers to two questions.

1. Do local authorities need the education service?

2. Does the education service need local authorities?

1. Do local authorities need the education service?

This is the easier question to answer and I take it first. Perhaps I may quote something I said to my own Society at their Annual Conference in July (The Society of Local Authority Chief Executives). This may persuade you that I have not manufactured this view merely to say something popular to a gathering of educationalists.

> "The real danger facing local government today is whether or not we can retain the services at present entrusted to us. For 30 years we have watched a steady decline in the range of local authority services. Do not suppose that the threats have all passed.
>
> How easy it sounds to remove teachers' salaries to the National Exchequer - at a stroke reducing the rate burden. Does anyone believe that that is where it would end? If you pay the piper,

you call the tune. Who will select the teachers to be paid for by the State? Who will prescribe the qualifications needed for particular posts? Who will be responsible for the in-service training and for teaching methods?

There are already powerful influences at work in favour of nationally uniform standards, particularly in education. These would all favour a steady increase in centralisation and a reduction in local autonomy and control. Make no mistake about it. If local government were to lose education, it would be a shadow of its former self. Nor is it hard to see that social services might follow.

May I say a word here about views recently advanced by Malcolm Bains and Mr. Musgrave (soon to be chief executive of Bexley) to the paper "Public Service and Local Government" and repeated in the Financial Times. I do not think either speaker meant his remarks to be construed as an attack on educationalists.

However, a call for critical appraisal of standards was seen by some as an attack on education. Mr. Henry Clother, a spokesman for the National Union of Teachers, called the two spokesmen "the new gauleiters. They have brought the attack on education out of the previous shadows into the open." This was a predictable reaction.

If the objective must be to keep education as an integral part of local government, then I do not think it is helped by chief executives, past or present, pointing a finger and appearing to say "J'accuse". Of course, education departments can sometime appear to follow isolationist policies.

But this must not deter chief executives of education authorities seeking to get involved in education matters, to understand, to assist. We must not be put off if sometimes we are met with suspicion or intolerance.

Education is such a vital part of local government that we as a Society must forge much stronger links with our education colleagues and work together on the important issues to which Bains and Musgrave drew attention."

I was delighted when my own remarks as President were echoed by George Cooke when speaking at the CLEA Conference. He said "However, I for one do not believe that local government can afford to do without education, nor do I yet accept that education would be better off outside local government."

I do not think anyone in local government would dissent from the view that we in local government must retain education if the local government service is to survive as we know it.

This is not of course a question of self interest. In this country we have rightly regarded with suspicion any attempts at over-centralisation. The long existence of the voluntary school in the 19th century was in itself a symptom of this desire coupled with the wish to preserve religious instruction. A strong and vigorous local government is a good corner stone for any truly democratic system.

2. Does the education service need the local authority?

I will begin with yet another quotation from the Report of the Committee on Management which puts matters in a very balanced way:

> "All service departments have close relationships with the Clerk's and Treasurer's departments. But many local authority services have little in common; there is no common endeavour in the provision of child care services and the fire services; the weights and measures inspectorate has no contact with the highway engineer; the midwife has more in common with the hospital service outside local government than with the many activities inside the local authority itself. At the same time the separateness and individuality of the various services can be over-emphasised. Many service departments are closely connected. The research report shows clearly the overlap in day-to-day functions between the children's service and the health, education and welfare services. In the wider context individual services, however disparate, are provided for the community as a whole. Planning for the development of the community, the allocation of priorities for finance or for space on the drawing board, the timing of the various schemes all demand a co-ordinated approach. The establishment of a managing body can provide this necessary co-ordination and focal point; it can provide both a unifying element drawing together the disparate parts of the whole and also the impetus for action."

In times of plenty, there is an argument which can be founded, that a corporate approach pays but a small dividend. My own experience up to 1973 was that the real problem was to spend the money which was available on improvement of the services in accordance with approved plans. In this sort of climate it is less easy to show the benefits of a corporate approach within the authority. Rates were not rising to any great extent in many areas. Ratepayers were interested to secure expanded services. There was credit to be gained for innovation. Departments could argue that mainly they needed to be left alone to get on with the job.

All that has changed. Resources are short. Priorities have to be established. Education is such a big part of the whole budget that it clearly cannot stand apart from the process needed to arrive at zero-growth or whatever target is currently being aimed at.

At the local level therefore education must take its part in the whole budgetary process. One cannot plead that education is sacrosanct, or should have some divine right to escape the scrutiny which will be given to all services.

In my younger days I believed more firmly in the possibility of ordering priorities and altering the existing bases for departmental budgets. Now I tend to the view that all services can make a good case for the continuance of their services at the levels of the past.

If we are in for a period of recession, then we cannot afford to run down the forces of law and order. There may be unemployed roaming the streets.

If we are in for a period of recession, then anything which helps us pay our way must have priority including new roads to speed industrial traffic.

If we are in for a period of recession, there will be a greater demand for inexpensive leisure facilities like libraries and countryside facilities.

If we are in for a period of recession ..... but I need not multiply the examples. It is a brave politician who, faced with such arrangements boldly gives priority to one at the expense of another. Brave and bold decisions are not taken every day with the result that so often cuts are shared out rateably between services. Clearly it must be a political and not an administrative judgement which orders priorities. The administrator works forward from the status quo: it is the politician who can, but so rarely does, prefer one service deliberately at the expense of another.

At least when education is part of local government, the arguments can be carried on with full regard to the local scene. There may be directions and standards laid down or advised from central government. But the interpretation will be local - with education playing its full share in reaching the decisions which need to be taken about the allocation of resources.

I turn now to a second reason for believing that education needs to be part of local government. Schools, colleges and other educational establishments exist to serve the communities of which they form part. Many other local government services are also community services. There seems every reason to plan these community provisions together whenever possible. There are many examples today where better use is being made of scarce capital resources because there has been an attempt to plan for the needs of the community and not just for particular services. Library centres in schools: joint sports facilities and general community facilities based on schools are now well known examples in this field. The planning of these arrangements is difficult enough between different branches of the same family. I doubt whether sensible community use of schools would be possible if education lay outside local government. Even now there seems to be more that could be done to make better use of the capital investment we have in our educational buildings.

There are obvious points of contact between the various parts of the services of local authorities which I can only mention briefly. If we consider a subject like juvenile unemployment we can immediately see a link with the police - possible increase in vandalism and teenage crime: with social services - the case of young people deprived of normal advantages: with the housing department - in relation to housing priorities: with leisure facilities. There may be opportunities for community tasks in the countryside programmes in shire counties and in other ways in towns. When we talk of a corporate approach to management, we mean an approach in which problems can be looked at in the round, with contributions coming from every facet of the local authorities work.

Lastly I want to refer to the possibility of importing into the educational world some of the management concepts which are being used elsewhere within the authority. A good deal of time and effort has been given to the measurement of performance in many parts of local authority work. A good example would be the systems of costing adopted by local authority architects to show their relative cost in relation to the employment of private architects. Much work has been done on unit costing for residential premises, so that the real costs of various services can be readily compared. There is a great deal of expertise available in local authorities which could, I believe, be harnessed to the advantage of the education service.

It is often said that educational benefits cannot be measured. As education goes wider and wider and deals in subjects which cannot be the subject of parrot-fashion learning, it is argued that it is pointless to try and set objectives or measure results. There is a danger here of educationalists being unwilling to experiment with techniques which are commonplace elsewhere. Maybe the memory of the 19th century "payment by results" has something to do with it. I believe that the most hopeful line of approach is to make the larger schools more clearly responsible for the use of an agreed allocation of resources: and to encourage headmasters in consultation with their staff and headquarters departmental staff to set objectives of a practical sort for attainment over a year or two years or as the case may be. Ensuring the best use of education resources is likely to be a major issue in the next few years. I suspect that we could do a great deal more to base our allocation of resources upon individual schools and to increase the accountability of headmasters and their staffs for the use of resources entrusted to them.

My conclusion is that, if clearly local authorities need education, there are ample grounds for believing that education also needs and should be part of local government. It may be true that in some areas educationalists pay more attention to pronouncements from the centre than from their own education committees. But this is not because the structure is wrong or because education would be better placed if it were directly the responsibility of central government. It is a criticism (where the situation exists) of the activities and application of the education committee concerned.

RESPONSE: MR. E. CURRIE-JONES

Fears and doubts were expressed by many educationalists when Bains reported on 'Corporate Management', and these fears were intensified when Local Government reorganisation got under way and some authorities appeared to have swallowed Bains hook, line and sinker. There were dire warnings and forebodings that the traditional autonomy of the Education Service would soon be a thing of the past, to the detriment of the quality of the Education Service and its administration.

Mr. Boynton, with his apt quotation from the report of Lord Redcliffe-Maud's Committee, has focussed attention on the traditional pattern of organising local government services, while at the same time pin-pointing alleged weaknesses in this Committee system, e.g. that "delegation disperses direction and control" and that "there may be unity in the parts, but there is disunity in the whole". I have never wholly subscribed to these criticisms, but my experience as a local authority member over the last twelve years has brought me into contact with a large number of members (not usually Education Committee Members), who took the view that there was something akin to elitism in the Local Government Education Service. To some extent this view was reinforced by the passion with which Education Committee members defended their estimates, and by the existence of independent organisations such as the Association of Education Committees.

There is no doubt that the scope of the operations of the Education Service and the size of its budget was an object of envy by some members; some members, particularly on Finance Committees, may have felt frustrated because such a large part of the education budget, particularly capital expenditure, was pre-determined by Central Government, and was therefore immune from the 'cutting back' process. Salaries, classrooms, teachers, grants just had to be provided and paid for, despite the ratepayers call for the cutting of expenditure, whereas other services such as highways are always ready targets for cut backs.

These, I believe are some of the reasons for the criticisms levelled at the education service in local government, and we are now criticised for unwillingness to accept corporate management. There may have been an initial scepticism about corporate management and management techniques, but I believe this was mainly due to a not unnatural concern about the quality of the service. People involved in the education service often feel strongly about Education, whether they be members, officers, teachers or just parents. They are proud of the service and do not wish to see it harmed.

Mr. Boynton has probed the present relationship of local government and the Education Service by asking two questions and suggesting answers. I do not differ from his affirmative answers to these questions, but I would qualify the answers and possibly suggest a different emphasis. - (1) Do local authorities need the education service ?

I happen to believe that Education is such a personal service that it is essential it should be administered locally, having regard to local needs. But I can think of some services such as the supply of energy, water resources, and possibly house building which in the long run can arguably be more efficiently provided by nationalised boards, or regional authorities. Even in the field of Education one is aware of voices arguing with some force that higher education in the non-University sector could be more effectively provided on a regional basis. You are meeting in Wales, where we are awaiting the detailed proposals for devolution which may have a profound effect on local government, and I suggest that the pattern set here and in Scotland may well be followed at least in part in the English regions. I agree that the loss of the education service would probably be a mortal loss for local government, but we must never forget that local government is a vehicle for providing a service to the community, and must be judged on its effectiveness in carrying out this task. I believe that Local Government is providing this effective service, but we could certainly publicise our achievements a great deal more.

The second question - 'Does the Education Service need the local authority?' deserves more than a simple 'Yes' as an answer, and Mr. Boynton has cogently argued the case for a corporate approach. It is very difficult to refute these arguments, particularly in the present economic climate.

It seems to me that the argument is no longer over the question of whether there should be a corporate approach, but concerns the extent to which we should travel along this road, and this has varied greatly from one authority to another. Most people accept that the needs of the Community as a whole should be looked at, not by way of providing separate services, but by a planned integrated provision which avoids overlapping and makes wise use of scarce resources. Some form of corporate planning and of corporate management is essential to this end.

Some of the more progressive (?) local authorities had already taken steps in the Bains direction before that report was published. Some had Chief Executives not tied to a department. Others had a system of pre-determined financial allocations to various committees taking the place of the usual free for all scramble for resources. This had the advantage of involving the Policy Committee or its then equivalent in the educational process at an early stage, and it gave Education Committees more control in choosing its own priorities within the allocation, and avoided the indiscriminate slashing of estimates by a committee of persons who very often know little about education.

Corporate management should go much further than this. As Mr. Boynton mentions - Resources are short, priorities have to be established, and it cannot be pleaded that Education is sacrosanct. This, however, should not be a once a year exercise, say, at estimate time. It is essential that the management team meets regularly throughout the year so that every officer and every

Chairman has the opportunity of learning as much as possible about every service, and its objectives. Without this process a meaningful dialogue between competing interests becomes impossible.

The Chief Executive's role is a co-ordinating one - he should not interpret his role as having a finger in every pie (or department). He is there to see that the corporate policies of the authority are carried out by chief officers, who although full members of the management team are primarily responsible for implementing policy in their own departments.

I would deplore the situation which exists in some authorities where chief officers are regarded as members of a full time management team, sometimes physically divorced from their own departments. The chief officer's main contribution must be that of expertise in his own department, and that professional expertise should be acknowledged by the Chief Executive without undue interference in the day to day administration of the service. Sometimes the danger of undue interference comes not from the Chief Executive himself but from subordinate officers in his department, which is even worse. Corporate management should not be interpreted as the development and appraisal of issues by multi-disciplinary groups without regard to the particular professional contribution of the individual professional officer; thus the contribution a Director of Education can make to development of housing programmes, or the City Treasurer to the development of sixth forms is very doubtful indeed.

There is, however, nothing incompatible between a corporate approach to policy making and respect for professional opinion - at best the one is complementary to the other.

We must not forget, however, that the best management team is a combination of officers and members, and members must be on their guard against a situation where the chief officers' team formulate policies to which the members give formal approval in Committee and Council. It is the members' task to initiate and take policy decisions, provided of course they have sought the expert advice and views of their professional officers.

Finally I am of the opinion that corporate management gives an opportunity, which members have not yet fully grasped, to effect a real shift in resources, not only from one service to another, but to particular deprived areas within an authority's jurisdiction. Here a corporate approach is essential, and obviously it must be a member's initiative - political decisions must be taken. It is arguable, however, whether this can be done at a time when services are at zero growth, and indeed Mr. Boynton has given examples of how necessary it is in such a period of recession to maintain certain services at least at the same level as the past. On the other hand it can be argued that this is the very time when people living in deprived areas need extra support and services. This is one of the issues, arising from Mr. Boynton's paper, which needs to be debated at length and in depth.

RESPONSE: MR. A.R. BARNES

Since Mr. Boynton neatly established his sincerity by quoting remarks made to his own kind, I cannot resist beginning by quoting my own words (though this might be considered a peculiarly introverted form of megalomania) to a gathering of headmasters on the eve of local government reorganisation last year.

> "I must tell you of my concern at dangers which lie ahead. You will probably know of the interest being taken in theories of corporate and financial accountability propounded by the Bains Committee, which did not contain an educationalist but nevertheless suggested a wholly new approach to management throughout local government. We are told by one of the committee that there is no essential difference between teachers and dustmen (which would make a sort of sense if one included chief executives in the same bracket) and that the independence of a chief education officer must be subordinated to that of a committee likely to be dominated by the Chief Executive and the Treasurer, because the education service must work in harmony with housing and the social services. It seems a thin argument: knives and forks have to be harmonized but we do not hold them in the same hand."

It is true, of course, that it is possible to phrase the central notice of corporate management in a way to which no reasonable person could take exception. If someone says, "We must co-operate as much as we can and save one another money if the chance arises" you cannot object without advocating sin. But the theory, as Mr. Boynton has very properly made clear, goes much further than this. It involves the application to education of management methods derived from other spheres and requiring the definition of objectives, progress towards which can be quantified within a short period of time. It requires a search for performance indicators which can be expressed arithmetically. And it carries the implication that the best people to devise, and perhaps to operate, new techniques of this kind are likely to be found outside the educational world, their ignorance of the atmosphere of schools and the traditions of the teaching profession being irrelevant or, in the view of the extremists, positively advantageous.

I am sorry that Mr. Boynton asserts that it is often said that educational benefits cannot be measured and that it is pointless to try to set objectives or measure results. I am not saying that, and my impression is that nobody else is either, save a few backwoodsmen. But the assessment of the success of a school or of a teacher is a subtle business, requiring recognition of the variety and disparate character of legitimate objectives, awareness of the need for priorities among objectives to be varied from time to time and place to place, and judgement of non-quantifiable achievements. For this task, we shall be wise if for the

foreseeable future we back the HMI against the computer. And though the computer and the algebraic formula will have their place as mathematical tools, I note that nobody outside the educational world has to my knowledge yet devised anything of this kind comparable in value to what is offered by T.I. Davies's "School Organization" or the Scottish Education Department's "Little Red Book" about which we talked in Edinburgh two years ago.

I am not impressed by the significance, mystical or perhaps just misty, attributed by Maud, Bains and now Mr. Boynton, to the unity of local government services. The worlds of the teachers and of the dustmen meet only tangentially - after all, much of the rubbish produced in classrooms is purely verbal and floats away of its own accord - and there are surely excellent reasons for the development of different styles of management in the branches in which they work. We ought to look at precisely where and why education needs to be closely tied to other services. That education and social services need to co-operate in helping individual children is beyond dispute and beyond jokes: the shades of Maria Caldwell and other tragically afflicted children are there to remind us. Experiments in the joint use of resources are also clearly desirable. But it does not follow that corporate management would have eliminated the errors and muddles which preceded Maria's death and joint use experiments in Cumberland, Leicester and Manchester, launched in the days before reform, seem to have been more successful than some more recent efforts of which I have knowledge.

The only argument that I see for bringing education under a unified control system within local government is that only in this way can sensible decisions be made about what share of available resources it and other services are to receive. But, as Mr. Boynton points out, such decisions are necessarily political rather than administrative. How, I wonder, can cabinet meetings of chief officers help? The director of education must surely tell the elected representatives what they will get - or, at the moment, what they won't get - for £X. The other chief officers must do the same. The treasurer must tell them what all this means for the ratepayers. And then the ball is in the councillors' court. If it isn't, it is hard to know what the whole structure of local government is all about or what it has to do with democracy.

You will have gathered that I see few advantages in corporate management. I also see its giving rise to positive harm, both in practice and in principle. I am satisfied that the heads of maintained schools have never felt themselves more hampered by local government procedures than in the period since April, 1974. Partly, no doubt this is due to the teething troubles of new authorities and to a conservative distate for change as such. Partly, obviously, it is due to the economic situation. But many of our frustrations arise from inept attempts at corporate management. Thus, in some authorities, the process of advertising vacancies has been centralised: the results have been delay always and damaging interference by bureaucrats sometimes. In others, personnel departments have intruded upon the processes of appointing suitable staff,

brashly claiming an expertise making them wiser selectors than the head and his governors. In one, the parks and gardens department have taken upon themselves the task of deciding whether schools want their flower beds weeded more than they want their football pitches marked. As many heads and teachers see it, there has never been more muddle or less consultation than since the dawn of corporate management.

I expect that Mr. Boynton would disown some of these actions as being due to a misunderstanding of what corporate management means, but the word "consultation" leads me to what I believe to be the central problem for educationalists. Consultation is as fashionable a concept in education as is corporate management in local government generally. I suggest that the two are irreconcilable. I am delighted that Mr. Boynton wants "to make the larger schools more clearly responsible for the use of an agreed allocation of resources" but he does not make clear who are to be the parties to the agreement, and I think he is in any case trying to have it both ways. It is surely inherent in the philosophy of corporate management that administrative authority should lie with the Chief Executive in cabinet like the Tudor King in Parliament. In enlightened authorities, there will no doubt be delegation, but of a functional kind only. The cabinet, the CEO or the Chief Executive will retain a powerful voice in the setting of objectives and will probably practice "management by exception", claiming a right of decision or of veto in any matter of significance not covered by precedent.

But the health of educational institutions requires much more than this. Both the proper claims of teachers to a measure of professional independence and the need to develop among all members of a school community, including of course the parents, a dynamic commitment to its achievement of its purposes depend upon a school - still more an institution of higher education - having a real measure of independence arising not from a conditional delegation of powers but from a real sharing of sovereignty.

I illustrate my point by two topical examples, the first legal and the other economic. The present articles of government of most secondary schools, which derive from the model articles promulgated by the Minister of Education 30 years ago, state that schools shall be conducted in accordance with the provisions of the Education Acts, DES regulations and the articles themselves, but new articles introduced recently by some authorities add to this list the significant phrase "and with any directions of the LEA". This amounts to a significant reduction in the legal powers of governors and a dangerous erosion of the freedom of schools.

Though no-one would question the need at present for teachers to co-operate in reasonable measures to reduce expenditure, you may share my horror at receiving this week a letter from my CEO telling me that the personnel committee of the authority had decided that as from last week no vacancies

could be filled without going through an elaborate procedure designed to establish the absolute necessity of an appointment and culminating in a decision by the Chairman of that committee. So far from being consulted, teachers had not even been informed of the decision until it was in operation. It is interesting, too, that the rule applied to teachers and clerical staff but not to caretakers, cleaners or kitchen staff. Who, one wonders, is afraid of NUPE, and who will be astonished when the teachers decide that only militancy and bloody-mindedness will get them anywhere? I do not know whether this is corporate management: it certainly looks like corporate pusillanimity.

I share Mr. Boynton's conviction that a strong and vigorous local government is a corner stone of democracy. I wish I could see more sign, however, of an awareness among both local government officers and elected representatives of the weaknesses of the present structure. It is frightening that despite public indignation at rate increases, most people do not bother to vote in local elections presumably out of a cynical conviction that it will make little difference who gets elected. I accept that if teachers' salaries were paid by central government, the DES would call the tune. I see the dangers to democracy which arise. But the temptation to break away from the present situation is strong, especially as I am not impressed by some of Mr. Boynton's warnings. It is arguable that the DES would be more enlightened masters than the personnel committee, at least in the short term, with regard to the employment of teachers, and that even if we do not want uniform standards, there is much to be said for minimum standards, which might improve the position of schools in the areas where the problems are many and, rate support grant not withstanding, the resources thin. I recall in this connection the legal arguments in the USA about whether intolerable inequalities of provision are compatible with the principle of equal treatment under the law.

It may be that if we decide in the end that the dangers of a centalized system of education are unacceptable, we shall still need to break completely with the present local government structure and set up a separate locally based system for education in the widest sense.

After the addresses of the two respondents the Conference divided up into groups for further discussion of corporate management and of the respective roles of elected members, officers and teachers.

When the plenary session was resumed, Mr. Boynton replied to points made by the respondents and to questions put to him on behalf of the groups.

REPLY: JOHN K. BOYNTON

In reply Mr. Boynton said that no one should under-estimate the threat posed by those who wished to see education removed from local government. Many parents would go along with the argument that education should be to a uniform standard all over the country. The argument of national uniformity overlooked the wide variations that exist in other nationalised functions, for example. the National Health Service.

Mr. Boynton said that it was also attractive to many people in education to see the burden shifted from local government to the tax payer. He suggested that those concerned with education needed to make up their mind as to the importance they placed on a strong local government. There were many arguments here which time did not allow for. A strong local government meant recruiting the right calibre of members and the right calibre of officers. Most people could see that a strong local government was an important factor in a democratic country. Those who did should unhesitatingly vote to keep education within local government.

Mr. Boynton thought that there were two dangers in the present situation. Local authority members may fail to see how much local government is strengthened by having education form part of its fabric. There were also educationalists who did not see the problems of local authorities in the round. They believed that transfer of functions to the centre would solve all the problems. Both sides needed to understand each other's problems and some past attitudes had not helped.

Mr. Boynton then turned to discuss various questions raised about corporate management. He pleaded that people should not confuse the philosophy with the practice. There were many new education authorities following re-organisation and they needed time to learn how to handle education as a function. He had been asked by one discussion group whether management teams derogated from the position of councillors. It was important to remember that officers were only a support to members. The management team was a support to the Policy and Resources Committee. It could elucidate the options but members would have to take the decisions.

Mr. Boynton said he was convinced that a corporate approach to management was essential in today's circumstances. If the resources were scarce there was a greater need for all heads of departments to sit down together and consider how the cake should be split up. He gave as an example the sort of problem which arose when the budget was examined in a corporate way. It was often urged that the personal services should be safeguarded by cutting into such things as road maintenance. The road maintenance budget in Cheshire was £6.9m of which £3.1m was spent by districts as agents. There was therefore an immediate problem that districts used their highway labour for other purposes.

Turning to the make-up of the budget Mr. Boynton pointed out that it was split as follows:-

43%	Labour
37%	Materials
20%	Transport and equipment

If materials and transport were drastically reduced the county roadmen would have no duties they could perform except sweeping and cleaning for much of the time. In other words to cut road maintenance costs meant cutting the labour costs. Corporate management would then find that there was a 10% turnover in a normal year and about a 6% retirement. Mr. Boynton said that as soon as you raise this sort of question, redundancy, retirment and so forth, you were dealing with a problem that affected every department. The unions involved, for example NUPE, were not just concerned with roadmen. They represented a wide section of manual workers in schools.

He felt sure that a chief education officer would effectively be able to contribute to a debate about the highway maintenance budget because many of the problems would be identical with those faced in the education service. There was however the other side of the coin. The corporate approach to budgeting allowed other departments to see the problems which education faced in making savings. Growth allowed for (4.1% on Government estimates of spending; 2.3% on local authorities estimates) was not much for a service strongly influenced by demographic changes. Primary school population might be decreasing but that did not make it easy to transfer teachers to secondary schools where numbers were still increasing.

Mr. Boynton then drew a distinction between corporate management and scientific management. Many techniques had been developed to manage better and some at least seemed applicable to the management of schools and other educational institutions. Some of these involved the setting of targets in agreement with those who were to try and meet the targets concerned. He felt that a good deal had been learned over the past 10 or 15 years by local authorities, particularly the larger ones. It seemed possible for this knowledge to spill over into the education field. Mr. Boynton queried the argument that performance could not be measured. The new comprehensive schools would be very large and needed a businesslike approach. Was it impossible that some standards could be developed for measuring performance? For example, truancy rates, absence of pupils owing to sickness, absence of staff owing to sickness, the number of children who stay on after school leaving age, academic successes, the range of courses compared with those in similar schools. Research would be needed and it would have to be done by people knowledgeable about education. It could not be imposed by the chief executive or any other management minded person.

Mr. Boynton said that he was personally convinced that better value for money would only come if schools and other establishments could have freedom to spend within estimates prepared in consultation with the school or establishment concerned. The trouble with capitation type allowances was that they tended to get spent whether they were needed or not. He would like to see much greater freedom to schools to decide where their priorities lie so that if, for example, they could make savings on heating by adopting a more spartan regime they could use the savings to buy more books or materials. This concept was simple but it would require a lot of working out. It did, however, also carry the implication that performance could be assessed. You could not argue for autonomy without accepting the concept also of accountability.

Finally Mr. Boynton said that he believed that educationalists would be likely to be subject to increasing criticism in the next 10 years. Salaries had improved and the public would probably be less forgiving than they were during a period when teaching was regarded as inadequately rewarded. Comprehensive education was being introduced at a time when there was a shortage of money to make it work. There were signs that the public were beginning to ask whether some of our present troubles did not stem from a failure of the educational system. Why was it that so many people had little or no conception of the constraints which had to be accepted in a capitalist democracy working within a mixed economy? Local government was used to being under attack and educationalists, when criticised, might find a good deal of help in standing shoulder to shoulder with their colleagues in local government.

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INSTITUTIONAL AUTONOMY AND PUBLIC ACCOUNTABILITY

The following note applies to Professor Kogan's article on page 19:-

(The author took note of several points made during the discussion but since some of them would require considerable development of the argument he has decided to keep the text of the talk as it was delivered at the conference. He expects to do further work on it later).

As with most important issues, the question of accountability for education has journeyed across the Atlantic. Yet there are differences in the problems as perceived by the Americans and by the British. In the late 1960's the problem for Americans was how school system might become more open to the community, parental participation, and control. That issue is certainly alive in the UK today and we all wait to hear the truths enunciated by the Taylor Committee. There is, however, an important difference in that American liberals were attacking highly formalized and impervious school systems in which administrators and teachers alike, it was maintained, were opaquely defensive to the wishes of the people. Here there is, of course, criticism of local authorities and of central government but the emphasis is more on the question of how teachers are and should be accountable to publicly elected authorities who are granted a reasonable degree of moral legitimacy and the right to administer. The heat is, in fact, on the teaching profession rather than on the larger governing system.

These issues have not, thus far, been subject to much research, and certainly not by the author of this paper. even of an historical or impressionistic nature. The comments here are, therefore, based largely on informed conjecture rather than on detailed study. But what a rich field for analysis and study.

The Concepts of Accountability and Autonomy

The dichotomy expressed in the title of this talk is classic. Accountability or answerability relies on the assumption that public institutions and those who work in them should respond to community and social prescriptions. The underlying premise is collectivist. Institutional or professional autonomy (and I shall argue that these are not necessarily the same thing) responds instead to individualist or atomistic, assumptions which would confer initiative and freedom on the smallest possible units, preferably individual people. This antimony underlies the whole body of social policies (1) and, I have maintained elsewhere, (2) the range of human desires and propensities as well. The duality is echoed in virtually every social setting where people have to do their own thing, but do it with regard to other people as well. It permeates all individual roles so that, for example, an effective teacher or educational administrator is forever changing gear: at some times the role demands collaboration and mutal service giving and attempts to relate collaterally to others within an institution,

whilst at other times the role demands taking on a sanctioned and necessary role of monitor, adversary or advocate of some outside or dependent or stigmatised group.

The Units of Discussion

If, then, we must observe these quiddities of accountability and autonomy in tension with each other within institutions, we must next determine what unit is appropriate for study within the educational system. It would be tempting to assume that professionalism and the discretion that surrounds it make autonomy essentially that of the individual practitioner. And we tend to mix two assumptions that do not easily relate to each other. The first assumption is that individual teachers have, or should have, professional autonomy and freedom. The second is a leading assumption of British educational governance that the prime unit of control and of work is and should be the school, the college or the university which also has autonomy and freedom.

In fact, however, we need at least three levels of analysis. The first is that of the individual practitioner and role holder. Secondly there is the level of what I will call the prime institution (to be defined later). Thirdly, there is the level of the total governing system or organisation. And they interfold with each other like one of those wooden Russian dolls. A large number of roles within education are both managers of subordinates and subordinates of managers.

Individual Teacher Autonomy, Accountability and Professionalism

The first unit for analysis is, therefore, that of the individual teacher. To refer to a point mentioned earlier, professionalism does indeed come in individual packets. Inasmuch as the term means anything at all (and I personally find some of the classic statements too full of overlapping categories to be at all certain about their usefulness) it is the freedom of the individual practitioner to assert professional standards and norms at discretion on individual problems or cases or people. He may work by himself, as does a medical general practitioner, or a solicitor, or a barrister, or in a federal practice relationship. If he works in a federal relationship, by definition he is really a solo performer sharing resources, institutional reputation, and so on. If, however, he works in a hierarchy, as teachers in schools do, the professionalism does not lie so much in the institutional oneness of the role, for prescriptions certainly are laid down by the total institution, but in what I think is really meant by professionalism anyway - the maximum of discretion to make individual judgements over the core activity of the institution - teaching and learning in schools, prescribing treatments in hospitals, determining social work procedures for individuals, and so on. And the public service has a wide range of such discretionary arrangements. The clearest example of the free practitioner working within an otherwise strongly hierarchical system is that of the hospital consultant within the National Health Service. He is,

in effect, a free entity, some would say autonomous, who runs his firm or department and expects from the hospital authority only the most general of organisational prescriptions which are embodied in the allocation of resources or the assumption that he will not be negligent rather than on the detailed allocation and surveyance of task performance. (3)

My starting generalisation is, therefore, that teachers in educational institutions, including schools, FE colleges, and universities, are within the British ethos expected to work within broad prescriptive limits, with wide discretion or with what some would call differing degrees of autonomy.

Prime Institutions

Now I must not go much further in analysing the role of the individual teacher if I am to keep to the terms of reference set me. But I need to examine this a bit further because, thus far, there has been no answer given to the question of 'What is the prime institution in education?' By prime institution I mean that role or collection of roles that has sufficient authority in terms of resources, legitimacy, public acceptance and so on, to perform the core activities without recourse to the total system except for the most general prescriptions. So a primary school is very likely a prime institution by this definition. Whilst teachers certainly have strong discretion over the way they perform their tasks in the classroom, if only because relationships between pupils and teachers are virtually impervious to outside scrutiny, the primary school must have a unitary philosophy, integration of curriculum and use of time. This requires submission to collective decision making (either by the Head or by the whole body of teachers). The clientele think of the whole school as the place where their child is being educated, rather than the class of the individual teacher. The school has, in fact, a public personality. In secondary schools, too, the same is true but many would now begin to ask whether for purposes of curriculum development, the exploitation of full teaching knowledge and skills, as well as democratic purposes of participation, a secondary school should not be regarded more as a federation of prime institutions which might be the departments or the houses or the years or whatever is the place where the core activities are worked out. (4). For the most part, the secondary school as a whole remains as the prime institution. It is not, as it were, a holding company for a federation of colleges. The individual teacher responds to prescriptions laid down by heads of departments but all, for the most part, have recourse to decisions made by the headmaster, very likely in consultation with his senior colleagues, and with consultative machinery within the school, for the various components of the key tasks of the school. The allocation of time (through timetabling), of accommodation, of equipment, and of the more intangible but equally potent dimensions of his work such as expectations of curriculum, internal organisation, educational style and aspiration, would, in the traditional model emanate from the head. No study so far (5, 6) has really derogated from the role of the head as manager or as chief executive. (7).

Developments from this position are being quite cogently argued. The demand is for a collegiate in place of a management or chief executive structure. As I understand it, those were the arguments originally proposed for Countesthorpe (8) and now by those secondary school teachers who argue that the whole school is too large for decisions on the main tasks and that, in effect, the department or if possible the individual should be the prime institution. It is true, of course, that the individual teacher is the provider of teaching and learning for his pupils but in a secondary school so many teachers have contacts with an individual pupil and the tasks of the school go well beyond what an individual teacher can provide, that we cannot say that he alone has enough authority or performs enough of the principal tasks to meet this definition. As a matter of fact, therefore, I conclude that in secondary education the prime institution is the school, although developments might change this position in some cases.

In further and higher education the position is somewhat different. In the universities and polytechnics of which the author has knowledge, the arrangement is predominantly collegiate. A university is essentially a federation of departments. The departments generate and authorise the curriculum although within the overall procedural structure laid down by the university and with monitoring by external examiners or, in some cases, professional bodies such as the Law Society or the British Psychological Society. But the department (or is it the individual teacher within it) is much like a medical firm within a hospital. It looks to the university for general sanction for its existence and for resources. It responds to general prescriptions about numbers of students to be admitted and the overall shape of degree courses. Where universities attempt to control or to colour the performance of departments' main tasks of teaching, learning and research, they become somehow unreal as universities. Thus the strongly denominational university of the USA or even the technological university in this country either sheds that distinctive orientation or is thought to be a bit funny. The university is, in fact, primarily an institution for allowing individual practitioners to do their work. And, as far as I can see, this is often true of polytechnics as well.

It is not clear, however, whether a university is a federation of individual teachers or of departments. The department can impose consistency in the curriculum it offers for its teaching and can also do something about teaching standards (but not too much) through the promotion power of its head, through collective policies about the admission of students and the classes awarded students. In some cases, I am told, but it is quite beyond my experience, the Head of Department may prescribe the teaching content of individual teachers. But, then, it is a matter of individual departmental preference as to whether those collective prescriptions are made collegiately by all members of the department or whether the Head of Department imposes them.

Thus far, the argument has been, therefore, that professionalism, an uncertain entity, might best be thought of in terms not of autonomy as much as degrees

of discretion which individual teachers hold. At one extreme, the individual teacher might be, in effect, a prime institution all of his own. To examine this properly, we should have to look at the role of, say, a Fellow of All Souls College, Oxford. In between, the units which are both free and accountable, in differing degrees, might well be the individual teacher, the department within the institution, the total school or college, or, perhaps, the whole system. My feeling is, however, that in primary and secondary education the prime institution is now the school. Within the 'freer' part of higher and further education, the department looks very much like being the prime institution. Reputations tend to be departmental rather than university as a whole, and that is where much of the academic freedom is exercised.

Institutions and the Total System

We must now turn back to the main theme of how far the prime institutions within the system are both autonomous, or free, and accountable. In the literal sense of the word, it seems likely that the only autonomous institutions are private schools and University College, Buckingham. But this turns, perhaps, on the pedantic question of whether there are degrees of autonomy.

The generalisation to be made is that there is no educational institution receiving public monies which is fully autonomous and which does not respond to one form or the other of prescription from some superior or otherwise controlling body.

Again, let us take the always ambiguous case of higher education. Relationships have changed radically since the 1972 White Paper merely decelerated the rate of expansion. (9). The standard description (10) of universities' relationships with the state was that they were given discretion in five year lumps, so that the prescriptions were concerned fundamentally with the balance between different course offerings and research, and the number of students accepted, with generalised cost limits, but that the core activities, teaching, learning and research, could be conducted in a way in which the universities thought fit. On those core activities there were, and still are, the external controlling influences such as those exerted by external examiners, the academic peer groups who so relentlessly review what is written, as well as the professional bodies that impose their own requirements.

In a formal sense nothing has changed on the balance between prescription and discretion. The prescriptive limits are always expressed in terms of resources and both the resource margin and the time span over which discretion is accorded institutions have tightened up considerably. Indeed, if, as A.V. Dicey says somewhere, the essence of the Rule of Law is predictability, the DES and the UGC are quite near to taking on the characteristics of the Mafia.

Yet resource controls over universities have always been there and the manpower planning component has always been there as well. But it becomes far more explicit in the UGC letters allocating resources for the quinquennium beginning in 1967 when UGC 'guidance' and expectations as to the balance between different types of courses and student numbers were overtly expressed.

But there is an important point raised at a previous conference by Dr. Eric Briault. He made the point that control over resources and control over the curriculum operate at two different levels within the school system. And he argued that there is no **true** control over the educational process if control over resources is separate. It is not completely certain that this must be so: it would be possible to argue, for example, that mutual vetoing - of the resource controllers who will only grant resources for the education which they want, and of the curriculum controllers who will only provide education in return for the resources they need - is a reasonable and natural way of proceeding in a complex political structure.

But Eric Briault illuminates an important point about universities discretion. For there must come a point where resource decisions bite into the essential discretion over the core activities of the universities and the polytechnics. For example, teaching in British higher education is thought to be strongly related to the research being undertaken by teachers. Whilst basic undergraduate courses might be taught from the main texts, no honours course is complete if at least some of it is not taught by specialists in their areas of expertise. If the UGC cuts our present quite liberal staffing ratios, and if teachers have to broaden the range of their work to meet the needs of a far wider student population, undergraduate teaching will inevitably be of a different kind because teachers will not have free time for research. Again, if the main resource for researchers will be that of public contracts, the nature of their other activities will be affected. I hasten to say that they may not be affected for the worst. But they will change.

So discretion over teaching and learning and research is there and is embodied in the teacher's free use of time. But inasmuch as that free use of time is limited, and the physical setting within which teaching is undertaken is cut down, curriculum will be affected.

Much the same will be true of the rest of higher and further education. But there are three important differences that affect the institutional discretion of the public sector. First, the governing mechanisms, namely, the local authorities have a direct control over resources so that the polytechnic or FE college is simply not free to determine how it might deploy them. Secondly, though the Departments in polytechnics, to take the strongest case, are often indistinguishable in style, expectation and assumed freedom from the universities, they have three quality controls in place of the university's one. Both types of institution have external examiners. The polytechnics have to

face the CNAA and also the staff inspectors with the regional advisory councils who make quality judgements determining whether advance courses should run and qualifications be given for them. And by the time we get to the national certificate and diploma system with their joint committees the same is true, but even more so.

As far as the schools are concerned we ought, once again, to recall the peculiarities of the British system. For where education is seen to be strongly instrumental and capable of being programmed to produce distinct results, a strict hierarchical structure with strong management and inspection roles and withsmall discretion at the school level follows logically. But where it is assumed that teaching and learning processes rely on interaction between individual teachers and pupils within a wide knowledge framework, the strong management systems do not disappear but there is more of a premium on discretion within increasingly wide prescriptive limits.

Most school systems have a hierarchical structure in which the providing or governing authority are in a position analogous to that of a manager to the subordinate head of institution. And central government prescriptions also have a place although there is certainly not a 'managerial' relationship between central government and local authorities in the schools. If we look at the main tasks of the school it is clear that they are not autonomous. They have freedom and discretion but within prescriptive limits. The British school has wide discretion over the content and organisation of teaching and learning which is its main task. The limits are those of finance, whether embodied in a general grant or specific grants to institutions, physical resources made available to schools, the number and types of teachers, the law of education which determines the number of sessions taught each year. The secondary school examination system and major issues such as the age of admission and type of subject structure in exams are decided by central government.

Moreover, and increasingly, governing bodies are beginning to take up a strong role. Professor Baron and Mr. Howell's researches (11) show a widely varying pattern throughout the country. In the larger cities, at least, demands are being made by parents and local pressure groups that the governing bodies, on which they get representation, will have a larger say in the appointment of staff, and will not shirk discussion of the curriculum, although that is where active pressure from outside meets active resistance from many teachers.

Policies for Accountability

So far, the argument has been almost totally in terms of autonomy, freedom and discretion. In what sense are teachers accountable?

First of all as far as school teachers are concerned there are components of accountability which can be stated. It is the teacher who establishes the content

of the curriculum in terms of his and the school's perception of children's development, and cognitive and affective skill needs. Secondly, he establishes curriculum in response to social expectations of what children need and what society wants children to have. Thirdly, he cannot do everything that society wants because society itself produces conflicts as to what the school should do, so choices have to be made. But then, fourthly, he ought to be accountable, but rarely is, for making clear the values being promulgated or, more often, insinuated into teaching, and what are the expected outcomes of teaching. (12).

Who is going to ensure that this accountability is discharged? The school will remain hierarchical and managerial, I assume, and the head, acting far more than is now common with an academic board of the school and with a strongly participative departmental academic system, will be accountable to the governing body for declaring the aims of curriculum and internal organisation as the school sees them. I do not suggest that the governing body should attempt to interfere in detail or even substantially with the curriculum. But they should be a point to which public declarations of intent should be made. And their role will be all the more essential as secondary education rids itself of selection, moves through a decade of uncertainty on to a genuine comprehensive system in which pluralism, which means everybody getting what they need, predominates.

Beyond the governing bodies are local authorities who should not shirk their accountability to the public to provide good schools. That must mean that they do not pretend that all teachers respond to advice and guidance and that some do not need inspection and sanctions. I have argued elsewhere that the tenure system ought now to go (13) although teachers might be de facto in tenure unless good cause is shown. And I should like to see the local government ombudsman turned into a real instrument of review so that parents who do not get a square deal from the local authority or the schools can go right outside the system to make their case.

What does this do to professionalism? It will strengthen it. Judges are quite strong people but are subject to meticulous appeal and review. Doctors can be sued for negligence. Academics can be hacked to pieces when they produce a bad book. These are the toning up processes which teachers do not have to face. True they have to face many other difficult situations not encountered by other professions.

It is far more difficult to specify the accountability of the university academic, or of the other academics, or of the other academics outside the compulsory ages and zones of education. Children have to attend schools. Nobody has to attend higher education and I hope it will not be thought special pleading to suggest that accountability of, say, university teachers might be exacted in two ways. First, higher education has been seen to be far more vulnerable to

government decisions than is the school system. The schools have to go on, and with their continuing flow of pupils the reward system of promotion and so on are also continuous. Higher education is subject to opportunity waves and to far more manipulation by public policy. This should not be a cause for complaint. Society will be exceedingly stupid if it does not continue to value higher education but, ultimately, the intensity of that valuation is a social decision in which university academics should have the last and not the first say. If higher education is thought not to be responsive enough to social needs, the government can withhold resources and impose conditions on everything except the content of teaching. The present complaint of the universities should not be about the government's right to make decisions but that the government has no policy whatsoever for the universities, that judgements are being made which simply do not accord to the facts - some university teachers work far harder, for better causes, and for less money, than do some civil servants - and that uncertainty has been allowed to cloud the relationships between the universities and government. Secondly, there is accountability to the market. The word soon gets round if a higher education course is no good. And universities, polytechnics and further education have been quick to respond to market pressures on them. Again, however, the tenure system needs a throrough review.

But having said this it seems to me that the case for the widest possible discretion is insuperable. At the conceptual level, we have the powerful claims for polycentralism put up by Lindblom and Braybrooke. (14). By assuming that institutions will be free, we are pursuing ends by choosing the best available means and giving them authority to get on with the job. In countries where the school is neatly tied up by the central ministry they have been no more successful than ours in inducing high skill training or in keeping delinquency at bay. As long as the accoubtability rules become strong, there is every reason for schools to become stronger and for institutions within schools to begin to be powerful. If the collegiate structure is not accepted yet in this country, at least schools can recognise that they are complex institutions in which collegiate sub-structures should be encouraged.

This leaves over, of course, the question of super-institutional objectives and how they might be achieved. Given discretion to each school or university or polytechnic the local authority or central government administrator has some real problems. For he, too, is accountable for the use of money and resources and for ensuring that people get what they want. This brings us into the touchy question of evaluation which is not part of my present subject. And it brings us into the more general problem facing officers of the larger local authorities and central government. How do they aggregate and disaggregate the work of a large number of free institutions?

This paper has necessarily been diffuse in its discussion and uncertain of its empirical base. The duality with which it began, of autonomy and accountability,

is a good one. Indeed, it is difficult to conceive of anybody in any social system who does not benefit from a measure of accountability. It tones up the freedoms which are enjoyed and sets purposes. Those purposes need not be exclusively external or immutable. Indeed, accountability within a publicly paid for system should include the duty to propose change in that for which one is accountable. Pushing out the limits of discretion, changing the prescriptive framework, and thus responding to the social environment which teachers should serve are part of the freedom and accountability which I have been describing.

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(12) M. Kogan, 'How Free Should Teachers Be?', TES, 5 September 1975.

(13) See (12).

(14) C.E. Lindblom and D. Braybrooke, 'A Strategy for Decision Making'.

RESPONSE: ANITA ELLIS

In responding to Professor Kogan's paper, I speak from the standpoint of one whose professional experience is - and always has been - based in secondary education. I shall address myself particularly to the word "accountability" although - without a certain measure of autonomy, it would be a word of little significance.

Accountability is for Heads and their staffs both a crucial and a painful word. It is my belief that in this country secondary Heads and their staff have a degree of autonomy which is considerable when one compares their situation with that of, for example, their American or French counterparts. However, there is very frequently an unwillingness fully to acknowledge the degree of autonomy which they possess, so as to protect themselves from the thorny responsibility of being accountable - : for the type, content and organisation of their curriculum; for the spending of their capitation; for the appointment and distribution of staff and their promotion; for the values and priorities which the daily organisation of the school embodies etc. etc. They are nevertheless accountable to their pupils, to their pupils' parents, to the society both of the present and of the future, to the LEA and in a particular way to their colleagues within their own institution. It is perhaps worth reflecting on the fact that a teacher's and a school's accountability has for a long time been exclusively based upon his/their examination results. In my first school the unfortunate teacher whose examination results were poor two years in succession, was handed a copy of the Times Educational Supplement as a strong hint that she should move on! The whole question of evaluation is in the melting pot - certain of the new curricular are far less easy to evaluate in the traditional method, not all pupils have the same awesome respect for public examinations held by some schools and teachers; the whole question is far more sophisticated and complex than was previously thought.

Before developing these points further, I should like to extend Professor Kogan's definition of professionalism - which underlies and informs what I wish to say. I believe professionalism further involves an absolute loyalty to the prime task. It requires an ability so to protect the boundaries of the task, that it is well and fully carried out; implicit within this is a respect for the integrity and work of one's colleagues, because the task in which everyone is engaged commands one's loyalty above all else. In that sense one's loyalty ultimately is to the task rather than to persons. In the case of secondary education the task is unequivocably about pupils' learning: intellectual, social, emotional and physical.

Schools are increasingly caught in a very painful dilemma as to the nature both of the teacher-parent contract and of the contract between the teacher and society - in respect of the present, as well as of future generations of adults.

The parent-child relationship is, in my judgement, paramount. In exercising his professional skills and judgement the teacher can find that he is in direct conflict with the wishes of a parent. The fine line which divides, in certain circumstances, his responsibility professionally to his pupil from the parents' rightful position (and his respect for that position) can be hard to hold when he feels the parent to be in error. However, schools, especially in the state sector, have traditionally often paid only scant lip-service to the fact that their pupils actually have parents and that formal education up to the mid-adolescent phase is a three cornered affair: pupil, school, parents. There are often cases of enormous arrogance on the part of a head and his/her staff in relating with parents. We are undeniably accountable to each parent who - either through choice or not - entrusts his child to us for the duration of the child's formal education. We must make clear our aims, our values and our priorities; inform parents about the thinking behind changes of curriculum and organisation and expect to be challenged by them as we work. We are, after all, working with their children. In my experience there are very few parents who do not care about their children. Parents often do not receive the respect due them by schools; schools are often trapped by knowing that the necessary innovations are difficult for parents to appreciate, as they are quite outside their own former experience of school. How does the school handle the parents' understandable anxiety and apprehension that their child is the guinea-pig, without compromising their professional integrity? In the case of the breakdown, albeit temporarily, of the parent-child relationship, the school must put its weight behind trying to support the healing of that relationship, without compromising either the child's future or the teacher's professional integrity. This is what accountability is about in this context - it is hard and painful, but it is of the very essence of one's professionalism as a teacher.

We are, at present, those of us working in comprehensive schools, struggling along a very difficult pathway. For the first time ever the whole of the population is required by law to remain in formal educational institutions well into the mid-phase of adolescence. The only curriculum models which we have are those worked out by our predecessors (and still largely in use everywhere) at the turn of the century, for the formal education of the sons (rather than daughters even) of the middle and upper middle classses, whose children were destined for the various professional and leadership roles in society. Furthermore, we are right in the midst of a technological and, one might argue, social revolution - such that none of us has any conception of what the adult lives of our present-day pupils will be like. What then is an appropriate and relevant secondary school curriculum to be? and how ordered? Those of us working in schools whose staff have the intellectual competence and self-confidence as well as social commitment to struggle with these questions, are working in virgin territory. We are nevertheless still undeniably accountable to our pupils, to their parents, to present day society and to the next generation for what we do. This is hard, but we must fully accept the responsibility and load of this accountability, as well as find the courage to proceed with our pupils further

into these unchartered forests. The man-power forecasts of the next 30-50 years tell us that the need for hewers of wood and the drawers of water will decrease drastically, but that society must have many more young adults trained to higher levels of technical skill than at present, and able to cope with a number of fundamental job changes during their lives; they must be able to cope with the uncertainty of much more mobile living and working situations, be able to cope with a reduced working week of perhaps 20-25 hours and the remaining so-called leisure time. Consequently, being realistic, we should be working within a time span of 40-50 years when we work with our pupils now. Society is currently highly critical of many of those coming out of schools and demanding a much improved product. Theirs is the right to demand - when they place an ever increasingly large slice of the economic cake into education. Notwithstanding that schools cannot be the panacea of all social problems, we must necessarily struggle with the issues of the future as we identify them, if we are not to sell our pupils, the next adult generation, down the river, and if we are to justify our existences to those who foot the heavy bills of education.

Finally, I want briefly to consider the problem of autonomy and accountability within the actual institution. I do not agree that bodies, including governors, external to a school should have any particular rights in the appointment of staff (other than of the head and senior staff such as deputies) or in the allocation of resources, or in developing and planning the curriculum. They should have the right to establish and require that those professionally skilled to work in a school, are appropriately competent and professionally and morally sound. Thereafter "the maximum of discretion to make individual judgements over the core activity of the institution" (Kogan) belongs to those who work within the school.

Traditionally each teacher has been fairly autonomous within his own classroom, accountable to the head, but otherwise safe unless he infringes the criminal law, because of the security of tenure which he enjoys. In my own experience this is in part changing: the concept of group-teaching, and a corporate management approach born out of the federation of faculty and pastoral units, in which each faculty chairman or year head is accountable to his staff for representing them and acting on their behalf at senior management level, demand a degree of accountability amongst colleagues that is probably new and painful, but certainly invigorating and strengthening of professionalism. The concept that each member of staff whether he be head or probationer, is acting on behalf of his colleagues in everything which he contributes to the whole enterprise, is difficult for many initially to grasp, but staff development along these lines, demands greater public accountability amongst colleagues and less protective covering up of the weaker members of staff. In such circumstances the head must be as accountable to his staff as they are to him for his decisions, behaviour etc. Unfortunately some staff prefer to choose the quieter life in which the paternalistic "he's paid to take the decisions and

carry the can" - philosophy obtains. In my judgement pupils deserve a better model of adults working together than that.

In conclusion, I should like strongly to support Professor Kogan's statement "that the tenure system ought now to go although teachers might be de facto in tenure unless good cause is shown". The poor self image and low level of real professionalism which has persisted amongst teachers since the last century has allowed them to defend themselves within a fortress of multi-union armour, whereby the incompetent, the idle and the inadequate who do not break the criminal law have an almost solid security of tenure, regardless of the fact that generations of pupils and colleagues have a "raw deal" in being obliged to work with them. This is the antithesis of professionalism, and ultimately blocks the rightful demands for accountability from government, the LEA, parents, pupils, governors and colleagues alike.

Like Professor Kogan, I am utterly convinced that public accountability with institutional autonomy strengthens the school, the teachers and their professionalism; it thereby offers their pupils and society a superior education service.

RESPONSE: D.J. MOORE

After Professor Kogan's paper it may be useful to consider a possible model of autonomy and accountability applied to an institution. In this case the institution is not a school or university but a multi-purpose College under further education regulations; there are over 600 of these in the UK and an increasingly large proportion of the population attend full or part-time for some type of post-compulsory education or training.

Certainly in this sector of education there is an increasing demand for both autonomy and accountability. Some degree of autonomy has developed as a result of the post Robbins "Nod" towards the colleges of education and the recent push to elevate polytechnics towards the universities. However, for most colleges autonomy is strictly limited both in the academic and the administrative sense. They are bound on the one hand by regulations relating to course content and course distribution and also by financial and administrative restrictions which may inhibit both good management practice and sensitive response to local needs.

Presumably such control is maintained because the providing authorities do not accept the professionalism mentioned by Professor Kogan of either the individual or of institutions. There may be good reasons for this, including the strange contradiction of claiming professional status together with very well-defined conditions of service. This in turn may arise out of conflicting demands from

the providers that while curricula should become more effective and that at the same time more individual care is required for students, there is still a demand for increased class sizes and more teaching hours by all concerned. In short, the two major components of the education service must agree on the degree of professionalism of both the teachers and institutions; in that way perhaps we can avoid some of the conflict which now exists.

The demand for accountability arises from several factors, firstly that the investment in education is now not only great but significant enough to inhibit other social developments in a time of economic stringency. Secondly, that the activities taking place in a college are not always easily understood by the layman - after all we can nearly all understand simple calculations and spelling, but how many ratepayers can understand computers or the need for them in a college? Which brings us to the third point: not only is there a lack of easy comprehension of what occurs in a college but there is a lack of consensus as to what should go on, i.e. the needs and demands of the community are not universally accepted; not everyone supports the concept of full time hairdressing courses as opposed to that of provision for the handicapped or an extension of "real" courses, e.g. engineering.

Fourthly, this suspicion and lack of understanding is often compounded by a lack of willingness to communicate on the part of the institution. This may arise out of a lack of awareness of the need, a lack of ability to do so, or indeed a not uncommon desire to exclude people either to maintain the power of a mystique or out of a fear of exposure which may or may not be justified. Nevertheless the consideration of these real or imaginary factors produce a real demand for accountability. This has also been aggravated both by the apparently generous conditions of service and by the Houghton salaries report; one only has to look at "Column One" in Education to have some indication of the depth of feeling which is building up.

The general feeling is therefore that accountability, if it has not actually arrived, is on its way, and indeed it is hard to understand why it is not already here. Perhaps the delay has been due to a kind of honour amongst thieves; after all this sort of thing might spread to the most unlikely places. Surely it cannot have been because after all these years we are not able to decide on a valid set of criteria for the purpose. After all, we all know gnarled advisers, grown gray and testy in the service of education, who can "sniff" a good college or school; I know one who regards the state of the lavatories as a good indication of effective management, and that is not as funny as it might sound!

How then might we proceed to audit a college for effective performance?

1. Professor Kogan quite properly requires that a public statement of interest is made; in fact that after proper consultations with the clientele, staff and the providing agencies, objectives should be set and approved. The very existence of a set of well-thought-out objectives should be regarded

as a plus point. I wonder how many colleges or schools could meet this requirement now and hope that half the staff had some familiarity with them.

2. One would require evidence of the establishment and use of a formal communication system for both staff and students operating in vertical, lateral and diagonal directions.

3. Similarly the institutions should be able to produce evidence of a reasonably sophisticated system for staff induction, development and training.

4. It should be possible to establish the presence of individual guidance systems for students on both personal and academic matters. This function should be available outside the departmental structure.

5. Bearing in mind that all FE students are volunteers, the institutions should be able to demonstrate a positive approach to the community at large and to minority groups in particular. This does not mean the odd advertisement but a positive attempt to establish communications with all types of individuals or groups from immigrant workers to large companies.

The points I have mentioned so far merely suggest that an audit might establish the existence of certain practices rather than look at their effectiveness, but it would be quite easy to gain some impression of effectiveness by the application of standard sampling techniques within the target groups. However there are other areas where one can look for more tangible indications.

In particular, there is that rather nasty matter of examination results. It should be possible to compare the number of students actually enrolled for a course, those actually entered for the examination and the resultant pass rate. There are national averages and these could be used as a mark against which local results could be considered, bearing in mind the various local factors which may be present.

Secondly, there is the traditional test of college effectiveness, i.e. enrolments, or put another way - "Never mind the quality, feel the width!" Putting aside perjorative terms such as Empire Builder or Robber Baron, it may still be possible to use enrolment as a measure of effectiveness if other factors are given due weight. These might include:

1. age distribution of the population in the area;

2. types of work available;

3. other kinds of educational provision available;

4. any rationalised distribution of courses between the colleges of a district.

It is not always sufficiently acknowledged that students in post-compulsory education vote with their feet and often need both locating and persuading, which implies some degree of expertise on the part of the institution.

Thirdly, there is the matter of costs. Although it is not possible, in spite of the Capp's Report, to apply a definitive detailed cost analysis of particular courses, it should still be possible to arrive at national averages at least for broad areas of work. These could then be used as a partial measure against costs in a particular college; any variations might be accounted for by local factors or by sheer bad management; in any event some clues would be apparent. This also implies that any savings below the average might be used for developmental activities. Implicit in any analysis of costs is the understanding that the staff-student ratio should be at an optimum in terms of minimum cost as opposed to maximum effectiveness.

There is no time to go into more detail at this stage but we can perhaps consider who or what might best perform the audit? Traditionally, attempts at this have been made by the DES and the on-going responsibility belongs to the LEA. Neither of these solutions are entirely satisfactory; firstly, because they do not have sufficient resources and, in any event, very few people would want to see established a large corps of specialist auditors permanently employed in what appears to be a negatively orientated pursuit. Apart from that there is already sufficient suspicion between the DES and LEA's on the one hand and institutions on the other, which is at least partly the result of the inspectorial role of both agencies being dominant in the minds of many teachers.

It might be worthwhile considering passing the function on, on a "one off" consultancy basis, to an agency which could organise a thorough audit. For example, an LEA or the DES might wish to undertake a review of effectiveness over the preceding five years for a particular college. In this case one might approach a special agency, perhaps based on a University Department, which would then agree terms of reference with the LEA and the chosen institution and would assemble a team of consultants to produce an audit. The auditors might be recruited as particular specialists from various other agencies including LEA's, Higher Education and even certain sectors of industry; one assumes that their auditing techniques would also involve consulting the local population.

There could be a number of additional benefits to this procedure. In the first place there would be no aggravation between college and parent LEA arising out of the dual roles played by officers. Secondly, the result is less likely to be biased by personal experience in the locality and an outside view might be more objective. Equally important, those being audited might also act as auditors in other circumstances and both experiences can only be beneficial forms of staff development. So far I have concentrated on the institution rather than the individual; however, any audit will inevitably throw up information on individual performance, and I agree very strongly with

Professor Kogan that any such scrutiny can only strengthen a teacher's claim to professionalism and the treatment to go with it. It is already possible to remove ineffective teachers if the proper method is used, although this should be easier to use and understand; but more important, there should be intensive and high level counselling for a teacher in difficulties, and a well thought out scheme for assisting career development in other directions. Given this, there might not be such unwillingness to be subjected to individual scrutiny and assessment. Once again a positive rather than a negative approach could pay dividends.

These have been necessarily brief thoughts on the possibilities of actually implementing a system of public accountability. I conclude by reminding you that accountability implies responsibility; by all means insist upon and implement accountability but only for those matters for which we are responsible. The Chief Executive Officer of an organisation cannot be made accountable for financial effectiveness if he is not responsible for all aspects of expenditure. One cannot demand accountability for a teacher's development of new curricula if he is not responsible for the allocation of his own time. Do not ask a college to save staff by mass lectures for key topics if it has not and cannot provide a room big enough to hold them in. In fact we are back to the original title, i.e. Autonomy and Accountability; the one must precede the other, and I am not sure there is sufficient of the former universities and polytechnics to allow a meaningful implementation of the latter, however much we would like it. I think, therefore, that further progress rests very firmly on the willingness of central and local government to proceed simultaneously with developing both autonomy and accountability.

DISCUSSION AND REPLY

Several points emerged in the discussion which followed the two responses. There was some consideration of the nature of professionalism. Anita Ellis' statement that it involved a concern for the performance of the prime task and its importance for children, or for whoever was the client, was also related to the 'caring' element involved in accountability.

In replying to the discussion Maurice Kogan said that accountability should not be confused with the general responsibility that any worker feels, or should feel, towards those affected by his work. Accountability, in formal terms, is something like "the duty to render account of work performed to a body that has authority to modify that performance, by the use of sanctions or reward". In this sense, the teacher is responsible to the pupil, but not accountable to him. The distinction is important because one of the main tasks is identifying the lines of accountability and determining the mechanisms by which it is administered.

There was some discussion about tenure. As access to secondary education became limited to fewer schools, because of the neighbourhood school policy, schools became more powerful. It was therefore important that totally inadequate teachers should not be safe for life. The onus should be on the institutions to demonstrate serious incompetence but there ought to be at least a marginal change in the presumptions about tenure. The difficulties of assessing teachers for continued contract and the fact that salaries (even after Houghton?) would have to be increased to allow for the removal of absolute security were acknowledged by the Conference.

There was some discussion of ways in which institutions might be audited, following David Moore's suggestions of aspects of an FE institution which could be subjected to outside scrutiny. He had suggested that an external group of professionals should audit. There was discussion, however, as to whether local inspectors could not sustain a sufficiently impartial view to undertake this task.

Professor Kogan concluded the discussion by making two general points. First, the major institutional components of issues of accountability and autonomy were the local authority, the governors, the teachers as professionals retaining autonomy or discretion, the parents, the inspectorates, and such external bodies as ombudsmen. These roles needed to be defined in terms of their respective tasks. The problem was, however, that each of these institutions had multiple roles. Different aspects of their roles emerged as they entered into different sets of relationships. It was therefore necessary for different patterns of relationships to be stated and for such patterns or models to be dynamised in terms of different value perspectives and the range of tasks to be performed. Secondly, this session of the conference had made a start on what was an extremely important and complex area of study. It has also shown how studies might begin. Two senior practitioners had been able to demonstrate how analysis could be related to perceptions derived directly from practice. On the basis of such statements models with a wider application could be created.

Dr Meredydd Hughes,
Senior Lecturer
in Education,
University College,
Cardiff

THE SPECIFICS OF AUTONOMY AND ACCOUNTABILITY: A SIMULATION EXERCISE

Briefing

You are Eryl Morris, Head of Abercwm Secondary School, formed by the merging in 1974 of two single sex four form entry grammar schools on adjacent sites in Abercwm, a small town in the county of Penmouth, near the Welsh border. The first form intake in 1974 was comprehensive, and the school will become a fully comprehensive coeducational secondary school as the 1974 and subsequent cohorts move up the school. There is now a large sixth form, but some contraction and change of emphasis are likely when the unselected pupils reach this stage. Increasing competition from the nearby Abercwm College of Further Education is also beginning to be noticed.

You were appointed at the changeover in 1974, and were grateful that many of the potentially difficult personal problems had been jointly decided by the previous headmaster and headmistress, both of whom were retiring. Your deputy, Mr. A.R. Evans, was previously deputy head of the boys school; the previous deputy head of the girls school, Miss P. Sykes, is your senior mistress. Staff retirements (a few of them premature) made possible a number of new appointments, including some young members of staff, to take account of the needs of the changing intake of pupils. The Year Master/Mistress System which you have instituted (with the agreement of Governing Body and LEA) at the lower end of the school is generally acceptable, but there are differences of view among staff and among parents about your policy of seven mixed ability and one 'remedial' form in the first two years. This has never been discussed in a staff meeting or by the Governing Body (which is responsible for several other secondary schools, also recently reorganised).

It is Monday, 6th October 1975, and you were away from school last week, on various committees and attending the BEAS Annual Conference in Cardiff. You have disposed of matters which required your immediate attention, and now have time to consider some of the more difficult problems which remain. There are nine papers still in your intray.

It may be of interest that the following questions have sometimes been posed in similar exercises on school management courses held at University College, Cardiff:

1. Does the item pose problems for me? What are they?

2. Are there any underlying issues to which I should give further consideration?

3. Should I act alone, or should I involve others in dealing with this matter? Which others? What kind of involvement?

4. What assumptions about people are implicit in the action I propose to take?

5. What are likely to be the effects on others of my proposed action?

6. What steps will I be taking to monitor and evaluate my course of action?

In the time available for group discussion, it is advisable to focus attention on the items perceived to be most directly related to the 'autonomy and accountability' theme, a judgement which may vary from group to group. When consideration is given to specific items, there will almost certainly be wide differences between group members on the 'action proposed', and attempts to reach agreement on a 'best' course of action may be unrewarding. A pluralistic 'contingency approach' is likely to be more useful, consideration being given to the varying circumstances in which different modes of proceeding might be expected to produce desired results. Such an approach has the additional merit of absolving the author of the exercise from the need to have a set of correct solutions or model answers up his sleeve, to be conveniently produced at the final plenary session of the Conference.

Meredydd Hughes.

The Intray Items S 1 - S 9

Item S 1

7 Eldorado Drive,
Abercwm,
Penmouth.

26th September 1975

Dear Headmaster,

I have been asked to write to you on behalf of the local branch of the Humanist Association, of which I am President. We understand that you have replaced the usual R.I. in the Sixth Form by a course in Comparative Religion, and that you have had Indian students from Cardiff University College to speak to the pupils about their Muslim and Buddhist faiths. We congratulate you on this departure from the usual practice of only presenting the Christian viewpoint.

As Humanists, however, we do not believe that your reform has gone far enough. In a country in which Christianity is now a minority religion, it is absurd that you have not invited anyone to put the case against any kind of religion. The Humanist Association would be glad to supply a speaker.

We would also be glad if you would come and address our Association on the subject, "Breaking with Tradition in Religious Education", bringing some of your sixth formers with you.

Yours sincerely,

R.J. TURNER.

Action proposed:

Item S 2

29, Southmead Road,
Abercwm.

30th September, 1975.

Dear Mr. Morris,

As a County Councillor and a member of your Governing Body, quite apart from being a deacon at Salem Chapel, I want to protest most strongly about what I have heard about your school from the mother of Jane Blake. I have been told - and I can hardly believe my ears - that instead of reading the Word of God in Scripture lessons with the older boys and girls the teacher has been allowed to bring in Indians and Pakistanis from Cardiff to try to make Hindus and Muslims out of our children.

I warn you that I shall bring this matter up at the next meeting of the Governors, and that I shall ask the Governors to insist that you do not have any speakers at the school without the prior permission of the Governing Body. Our dear children must be protected against misguided pagans and atheists.

Yours very indignantly,

ERASTUS ROBERTS, J.P.

Action proposed:

Item S 3

D.R. Sinclair, M.A.
Director of Education.

All correspondence to be
addressed to the Director.

The Education Department,
County Hall,
Penport,
Penmouth.

29th September, 1975.

TO THE HEADS OF ALL PRIMARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOLS.

You will know that Penmouth County Council has decided, in principle, to adopt an extensive Central Purchasing Scheme affecting all departments. At its next meeting 23rd October the Education Committee will be considering the educational implications of this decision, which will, it is estimated, result in an overall saving of 10 per cent of total expenditure.

With regard to primary and secondary schools the Education Committee will wish to consider the problems of standardisation for bulk purchasing at three levels:-

1) Stationery requirements. At present many schools have their own individual orders for exercise books, practical books, graph books and drawing books of various shapes and sizes. Some schools have distinctive school crests on all books. A measure of rationalisation would clearly produce a great saving and the recent reorganisation of secondary education within the Authority makes this an opportune time to consider the matter.

2) Equipment and learning aids. The standardisation of audio visual aids probably presents fewer problems than does the standardisation of orders for scientific equipment in secondary schools, but the heavy expenditure which the Authority is now incurring with respect to the equipping of Nuffield science and similar courses makes it necessary for these problems also to be faced.

3) Text books. It is recognised that this is traditionally a sensitive area for the teaching profession in this country, but it may well be argued in committee that the freedom of the individual teacher to choose his own books is an expensive luxury in a period of extreme financial stringency. The Education Committee may well wish to consider some system of teacher committees on a subject basis, which would produce some rationalisation without complete uniformity.

Your comments on these proposals as they would affect your school are now invited.

D.R. SINCLAIR

Director of Education.

Action proposed:

Item S 4

2nd October

Phone Message.

Mr. Thomas, the Head of Deep Quarry Primary, rang up to complain because some of the Heads of Department at Abercwm "seem to be trying to tell me how to do my job". The trouble appears to have flared up as a result of a chat between Mr. Thomas and our Mr. Williams (Head of Maths) who is sceptical about the "airy-fairy" syllabuses of some of the primary schools.

S. Price.
Head's Secretary.

Action proposed:

Item S 5

MEMO

To: The Head
From: P. Sykes, Senior Mistress.

Thursday

Miss Evans is very upset because the County P.E. Organiser, Miss Walcott, criticised her conduct of a gym lesson with 2DE in front of the girls and took over the lesson.

Miss Evans says she is sure that her methods are more modern than those of Miss Walcott, who completed her training 30 years ago, but I am more concerned about the professional aspect of the matter. Several of the women staff feel as I do, and we remember that Miss Standish (the previous Head of the Girls School) often had to take a firm line with these County Organisers.

Action proposed:

Item S 6

MEMO

To: The Head
From: J. Lloyd, First Form Year Master

There are a couple of points about which I had hoped to have a word with you:-

1) Several Heads of Department are complaining of the poor grasp of basic knowledge and skills shown by this year's comprehensive intake, particularly those from the "progressive" primary schools. Is this a matter which you could take up with the primary school heads, either collectively or individually?

2) This year's Form 1 form teachers are finding that resistance is building up against our insistence on school uniform. I am enclosing some of the letters from parents. Several of them have been to see me in the last few days. Some have older children who went to secondary moderns where there was no uniform, so they don't see the need for it here - one said that it smacked too much of the old grammar school'.

P.S. from the Deputy Head.

I think you ought to know that there is something of a split among the staff on this uniform issue. The sympathies of the young comprehensive enthusiasts who joined us last September are with the anti-uniform brigade.

A.R.E.

Action proposed:

47

Item S 7

"Devonia",
Rookwood Meadows,
Abercwm.

1st October, 1975.

Dear Mr. Morris,

I am writing on behalf of a good number of the parents who were present at the Third Formers' Parents' Meeting to suggest to you that we should have a Parents' Association - or, better still, a Parent-Teacher Association. As you probably know, there used to be Parents' Association at the Girls School, which was very flourishing when my eldest daughter was there. In those days it collected a lot of money for the School, but many parents lost interest when the Head made it clear that she did not wish the Association to discuss anything even faintly educational. The Head of the Boys School would not have a P.A. at any price.

Now that the schools have merged and have gone comprehensive, I'm sure there are many things the parents would like to discuss and have explained to them. Many of the parents are concerned about the "mixed ability teaching" which has been introduced into Form 1, and feel that they should have been consulted about it. Others have very strong views on school uniform, and many of us consider that the parents should be represented on the Governing Body.

Please could we have a parents' meeting to go into these matters and to start a new association? Those of us who were on the committee of the defunct p.a. of the Girls' School would be very glad to help.

Yours sincerely,

Amelia Willoughby-Jones.

Action proposed:

Item S 8

D.R. Sinclair, M.A.,
Director of Education.

All correspondence to be
addressed to the Director.

The Education Department,
County Hall,
Penport,
Penmouth.

1st October, 1975.

CONFIDENTIAL

TO ALL SECONDARY SCHOOL HEADS

Heads are asked to give preliminary thought to a matter which I intend to raise at my customary annual meeting with Secondary School Heads, which will take place later this term.

In line with the policies of its predecessors before local government reorganisation, this LEA has carefully avoided taking cognizance of alleged marked disparities in the public examination results of apparently similar, and similarly situated, secondary schools under its authority. Neither has there been any attempt to compare performances at O and A levels of pupils in the schools with that of students in our colleges of Further Education, where a remarkable increase of such work has recently taken place.

We are entering a period in which the LEA's policy of non-intervention in these sensitive areas will be less defensible, as the availability of adequate resources even for the maintenance of the status quo becomes extremely problematical. It is clear from the preliminary work already done by my staff on the 1976-7 estimates that the problems of resource allocation are likely to be acute. Their resolution is likely to pose a threat to many cherished traditions.

Without necessarily wishing to imply that the views of the various Governing Bodies will be of no consequence in these matters, I would like Heads to consider as a matter of urgency the question of how performance-based criteria might be acceptably applied in the allocation of staff and other resources to secondary schools. The issues involved can then be taken further at our meeting.

D.R. Sinclair
Director of Education.

Action proposed:

Item S 9

The Society of Secondary School Heads

(S.S.S.H.)

Division XXV

Penport High School,
Penport,
Penmouth.

3rd October, 1975

Dear Colleagues,

S.S.S.H. General Council will shortly be drafting the Society's Evidence to the Taylor Committee of Enquiry into the Management and Government of Schools. Views have been requested from Divisions, and this will therefore be the main topic at our next Divisional Meeting.

It appears that the Taylor Committee has itself identified the following as some of the main issues:

1. Whether Governing Bodies are necessary;
2. If so, what should they do;
3. Those who have an interest in these functions and the need for direct representation of their interests;
4. The structure which would best enable the functions to be carried out;
5. Whether each school should have its own governing body, separate from that of any other school;
6. The extent to which, if at all, the composition, functions and structure of school government machinery should be prescribed by law.

In order to facilitate discussion at the Divisional Meeting, I would be glad to receive from colleagues some preliminary expression of views on these issues and any other matters considered relevant to the Committee's work.

Yours sincerely,

M.A. Phillips.
Hon. Sec., Division XXV.

P.S. I am lookint to you, Eryl, for some help with this additional chore from H.Q. M.A.P.

Action proposed:

GROUP REPORTS AND FINAL REVIEW

The following has been compiled from the reports to discussion group Chairmen. The deliberations revolved, in the main, around the subjects of: corporate management in the local government service; institutional autonomy and accountability: the role of governing bodies.

There was controversy over the definition of 'corporate management'. Members were sceptical about the extent to which it had been introduced into local authorities, and found that, where it was used, practice differed widely. Distinctions were drawn between 'corporate planning' and 'corporate management', and Mr. Boynton was asked if he believed that corporate management should be concerned with policy, leaving the administration of the policy to departments. He agreed that this was so - corporate management did not, and could not, absolve the departments from day-to-day discharge of their responsibilities. Some groups thought that the system would lead to even slower decision-making, and where corporate management has been introduced it was felt that it placed excessive emphasis on uniformity - of goal, structure and evaluation, and failed to recognize that each sub-system or sub-unit had its own aims and goals.

The purpose of corporate management was thought to be to establish priorities in the process of resource allocation, but all were conscious of the problems of attempting to apply quantitative techniques - the difficulties of deriving comparable measures of performance between disparate services. More attention should, however, be given to the appraisal of performance within the education service, but this should be regarded as a separate issue to that of the allocation of resources to institutions.

It was felt that many current problems were due not, necessarily, to corporate management, but to the economic stringencies imposed simultaneously with the introduction of the new corporate style.

In discussing institutional autonomy and accountability, there was some preference for the definition of "accountability" put forward by an Australian visitor to the conference: that one is accountable to those who have placed one in a position of trust and that accountability is expressed in terms intended to secure the continued renewal of that trust. One group distinguished between:

(a) professional responsibility to the 'market' (governors, parents, pupils) and (b) public accountability in the financial or task-orientated sense. The first implies autonomy and the educator's right to an evaluation of his role by a fellow professional, the second involves scrutiny by the local authority. The successful manager (corporate or otherwise) has to balance the two. It was felt that if schools had a high degree of autonomy the Chief Education Officer could be left with the problem of being accountable in more detail to his Chief Executive (and Management Team) than was the institution to him.

The discussion of governing bodies left most people believing that there was a need for "some sort of committee, council or board, which will reflect the opinion of an independent group of people to the school". The titles 'Governor' and 'Governing Body' were thought to be misnomers, and inappropriate. The body, however named, should include teachers, parents (both of the school and any 'feeder' schools), pupils over the age of sixteen, and a representative of the local authority. A group commended the Sheffield practice of involving all elected members in school government as the representative of the school's catchment area.

The responsibilities of the governing body were seen to be: (a) to appoint the Head and (in consultation with the Head) the other staff (b) to support the Head and legitimate his decisions (c) a staff development policy (d) to act as a channel of communication between school, community, and local authority, (e) to monitor and advise the Head as he makes value judgements between school and community interests. Some body for dialogue with parents and the community is essential, but there is a potential clash between parental and community pressure for participation, and the teachers' desire for autonomy. The reconciliation of these demands will be a major task for those charged, in the future, with school government.

It is probably rare for a conference to achieve precisely what its organisers intended; so often there are unintended achievements, both positive and negative, the flavour of which cannot be captured in a summing-up or in conference proceedings. On this occasion the Cardiff Steering Committee's first aim of providing an opportunity for differing viewpoints to be presented and then vigorously examined in small-group and plenary sessions, appears to have been satisfactorily achieved, thanks to the co-operation of speakers, respondents and conference members. Cardiff 1975 has also been a landmark in bringing together, both formally and informally, a group of people who collectively represent an impressive diversity of interest, experience and expertise related to the administration of education in the United Kingdom.

In considering the implications for education of corporate management in local government, and then turning to the issues which arise as educational institutions come to terms with a measure of external prescription, our concern has been with accountability and autonomy, not as alternatives, but as significant and meaningful concepts which need to be better understood in relation to each other, having regard to specific organisational settings. Not the least of the achievements of the conference has been to show convincingly that in this sensitive area it is not helpful to think in terms of a polarity of mutually exclusive alternatives: a tidy dichotomy seldom accords with the complexities of administrative practice.

Occasionally in our discussions there were faint echoes of the rigidly incompatible stereotypes we were trying to repudiate. In the scientific management tradition of organisational theory, accountability was achieved very simply by breaking down the tasks of the organisation into specific and clearly defined elements, each of which could be checked and evaluated, using objective criteria of measurement; the logical outcome of such approaches is a progressive dimunition of areas of discretion, personal judgement and autonomy. At the other extreme is the view, seldom explicitly expressed, that individuals or groups possessing certain skills valued by the community are not required to explain and justify to the wider society, even in the broadest terms, the decisions which they make or the resources which they claim; there can be no accountability, it seems, because the professional knows best.

It needs to be clearly stated that, in relation to the education service, neither of these models is seriously advocated today. Thus John Boynton was at pains to point out that corporate management need not herald the end of professional discretion; in particular he was in favour of making large schools "more clearly responsible for the use of an agreed allocation of resources". Maurice Kogan claimed that accountability is beneficial and invigorating and strengthens professionalism: "it tones up the freedoms that are enjoyed and sets purposes". In spite of differences of emphasis, the co-existence of autonomy and accountability was the underlying assumption of both speakers.

That the two principles are potentially complementary and can operate simultaneously is not always recognised. The contributions of the four respondents, and particularly those of Alan Barnes and Anita Ellis, demonstrate that there can be severe difficulties in practice in setting up arrangements which will be both acceptable and effective. Perhaps there is here a timely warning to those of us involved in teaching in the field of educational administration; in an area in which there is a scarcity of empirical data and of relevant theory, it may be wise to avoid the temptation of too readily adopting a prescriptive approach, whereby for instance, one urges the merits (or demerits) of particular interpretations of institutional autonomy or of corporate management.

The last point is also applicable, I would suggest, to the kind of assistance which BEAS can corporately give to an official body such as the Taylor Committee, several members of which have been present at the conference. As a society we are hardly in a position to offer a specific prescription or a precise itinerary for the Taylor Committee's journey of exploration. We may have been of some assistance at this conference, however, in identifying salient features of the territory to be traversed, so that the likely implications and consequences of different options are more clearly appreciated.

Perhaps I may, finally be permitted to offer two general points in relation to the Taylor Committee's remit, which appear to follow naturally from our deliberations. Firstly, I suggest that any new arrangement proposed for the government of schools should be sufficiently flexible to make it possible to take full advantage of the ideas and experience of those involved in implementing it. Secondly, in view of general agreement that there has been far too little appreciation in Britain of the idea that planned change in education needs to be evaluated as it occurs, I would strongly urge that thought be given to ensuring that any change which is instituted is properly monitored and assessed. This is all the more important because the reports that are available on educational change elsewhere generally agree that the change which actually takes place tends to differ in significant respects from the change which was intended.

The importance of feedback and evaluation is a familiar emphasis in courses in educational administration, derived from the founding fathers of management theory. Flexibility and participation are the key concepts of a more recent generation of organisational theorists. It seems appropriate to end our conference by commending these complementary ideas to the Taylor Committee.

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